



File Code: 1950
Date: May 5, 2016

Dear Potential Participants:

The Blue Mountain Ranger District of the Malheur National Forest invites you to actively participate in the planning of the Ragged Ruby Project. The planning process evaluates and describes management opportunities for mutual private and public benefit in our next planning area, the Ragged Ruby Project. We are seeking to develop partnerships to accomplish more landscape scale outcomes on the ground. The overall intent is to look for restoration opportunities that improve the health and well-being of our forest, watersheds, and community.

This is a participatory process that works through your involvement with a core Forest Service interdisciplinary team. The core team is the catalyst for developing and sharing information with participants and incorporating the participants' feedback throughout the process. The process begins by developing a thorough understanding of the landscape. The interdisciplinary team, with your involvement, gathers and shares information that helps to understand how historical land uses and natural events may have changed the landscape.

The interdisciplinary team will then work with you to capture the values people hold for this area. Together we will determine the important aspects of this landscape to maintain and restore. The project focuses on both ecological and socio-economic benefits. The ideas and concepts produced from this effort will be brought forward into planning efforts that will be evaluated through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning process.

We need your input as stakeholders to help us understand the landscape from your perspective and together, develop mutually beneficial outcomes. **We invite you to bring information and ideas to present and share with the interdisciplinary team and other stakeholders on what is important to you in the Ragged Ruby planning area.**

The goal of this meeting is to share what is known about the existing condition of the planning area and solicit input and feedback. Additionally, we hope to learn as much as possible from all of you on what is important regarding the area. We invite and encourage your input throughout all phases of the planning process.

A meeting to share information about the planning area will be held on May 24, 2016, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the Grant County Airport, 720 Airport Road, John Day, Oregon. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can access an informational packet we are preparing on the Ragged Ruby planning area on our Forest website at:
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/malheur/landmanagement/projects>. We anticipate that this information packet will be available and posted online by May 24, 2016.



Attached is a map of the Ragged Ruby planning area to help you identify specific areas that you are interested in.

We hope you are interested in being a part of this exciting approach to land management and we look forward to your involvement and contribution. If you have any questions, please contact Sasha Fertig (NEPA Planner) at sashafertig@fs.fed.us or 541-575-3061. Thank you for your time and we look forward to working together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave Halemeyer".

DAVE HALEMEIER
District Ranger

Enclosure